



2008

Land Use and Housing

THE CHALLENGE

The region's challenges related to traffic congestion, air quality, housing availability and affordability and nearly all of the other issues identified in this Plan can be traced, at least in part, to the intersection of land use decisions, transportation planning and the growth of our population and economy. In a region where outward expansion has been the norm, there is now a perception that we are "built out," with little available land left to accommodate growth. Complaints that new development is overburdening transportation infrastructure are becoming commonplace as traffic congestion and delay worsen. Commutes in many parts of the region are long and getting longer - indicative of a jobs-housing imbalance as people live far from where they work.

California's system of municipal finance has forced local governments to make land use decisions based on revenue-generation concerns rather than sound planning practice. Housing costs have skyrocketed as the supply of housing has failed to keep pace with a growing demand (see Figure 2.1).

Linking Land Use and Transportation Planning

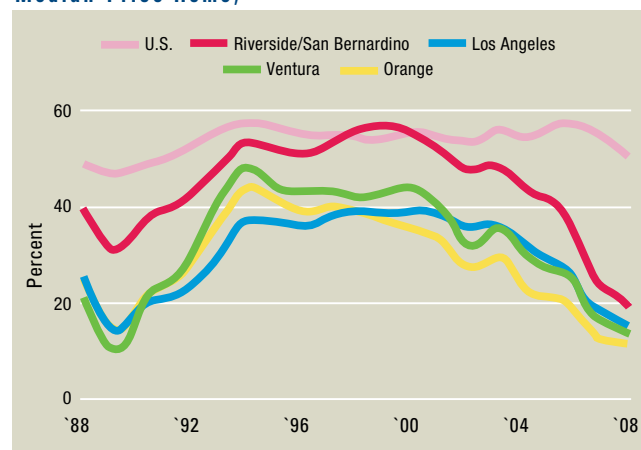
The quality of life in any region depends in large part on travel - how easy it is to get from home to work and back, the amount of time spent commuting, and the types and degree of choices available for getting around. Closely related to that

are the choices we make about how land should be used. The types and appearances of buildings, how they function in a neighborhood or business district, and where they are located all have an effect on transportation use. For example, a small neighborhood that combines a shopping area with nearby residences makes it easier for people to walk for some of their trips (see Figure 2.2). Highway-adjacent commercial development, however, tends to require auto travel for all trips.

At the same time, decisions made about transportation also affect what and where we build. Freeway interchanges usually

FIGURE 2.1

Housing Affordability
(Percent of Households Who Can Afford to Purchase a Median-Price Home)



Source: California Association of Realtors



HOW LAND USE AND HOUSING POLICES PRODUCE MULTIPLE BENEFITS

Open Space and Habitat: Emphasizing infill development and focusing growth around urban centers and transportation nodes will discourage sprawling “leapfrog” development, slow the rate of land consumption and help protect important open space on our urban periphery.

Water: Greater emphases on multi-family and non-traditional housing and green building practices help reduce per-capita water consumption, particularly for residential irrigation use.

Energy: Balanced land use growth patterns will reduce VMT and the fuel demands for vehicle travel. Mixed land uses near transportation services can save consumers up to 512 gallons of gasoline per year. Households in transit-oriented developments drive 45 percent less than residents in auto-dependent neighborhoods.

The region’s challenges can be traced to the intersection of

FIGURE 2.2
Before and After Photo-Morph



Source: SCAG

encourage development of auto-oriented stores and services, while transit and pedestrian amenities stimulate “Main Street” business and residential development nearby.

We are still growing – the region is expected to add another seven million residents by 2035. The new arrivals are members of our own growing families and those attracted by the strong regional economy and we can expect this growth regardless of the land use decisions we make. However, by linking responsible land use and transportation planning, we can accommodate growth while maintaining the region’s mobility, livability, prosperity and sustainability.

THE PLAN

Sustainably planning for land use and housing in Southern California will maximize the efficiency of the existing and planned transportation network, provide the necessary amount and mix of housing for our growing population, enable a diverse and growing economy and protect important natural resources.

We can achieve land use and housing sustainability by implementing the Compass Blueprint planning principles developed corroboratively by SCAG and other partners since 2000. Implementing Compass Blueprint will result in significant land use changes to only 2 percent of the total land area in the region. Implementation efforts, by all levels of government

and all stakeholders, are part of what is referred to as the “2% Strategy.”

SCAG’s transportation modeling and other analyses show that implementing the Compass Blueprint scenario will:

- Provide adequate and affordable housing for our growing population. Production of new housing units will provide an economic stimulus to the region through direct investment and new jobs.
- Promote improved jobs-housing balance throughout the region. Locating new housing near jobs, new employment centers near housing, and both housing and jobs near transit and other transportation corridors will shorten commutes and allow commuting options other than single occupancy vehicles.
- Reduce regional vehicle miles traveled (VMT), resulting in reduced traffic congestion and delay and reduced air quality impacts. Reduced VMT will also lead to significant infrastructure cost savings.
- Improve social equity and environmental justice through revitalization of older suburban and inner-city locations, promotion of economic development in urban core areas and enhancement of local property and sales tax revenues.

Development of the Compass Blueprint

The Compass Blueprint growth vision, 2% Strategy and the Goals, Outcomes and Action Plan outlined in this chapter are the products of a proactive and integrated process that began in 2000 with direction from SCAG’s Regional Council and a region-wide series of workshops involving over 1500 stakeholders. SCAG’s quantitative modeling and policy analysis techniques then determined some of the objective land use, transportation and economic implications of a range of alternative growth scenarios. By 2004, a regional consensus emerged on a growth vision/land use scenario that will enhance Southern California’s livability, mobility, sustainability and prosperity.

The Compass Blueprint growth vision formed the basis for the preferred land use alternative in the 2004 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). Continued technical analysis and a 2006 series of stakeholder workshops at which over 90 percent of the region’s jurisdictions were represented, have resulted in an updated growth vision and a significantly refined scenario. This became the preferred land use alternative for the 2008 RTP and the foundation of the Land Use and Housing chapter of this RCP.

Ultimately, the region should work together toward the outcome of realizing, by 2035, development and redevelopment consistent with the Compass Blueprint growth vision and the Plan Alternative growth scenario developed for the 2008 RTP



HOW LAND USE AND HOUSING POLICES PRODUCE MULTIPLE BENEFITS

Air Quality: Land use decisions that reduce the number or length of vehicle trips will directly improve air quality by reducing regional VMT and associated vehicle start, running, and soak emissions.

Solid Waste: Greater emphases on infill development and green building practices will help reduce construction-related waste.

Transportation: Land use decisions may be the single most important factor in determining the performance of the transportation system and in evaluating the need for future transportation investments. Implementation of Compass Blueprint program can reduce about 8.6 million daily VMT in the region.

Economy: Providing an adequate supply of housing that is affordable and desirable will support a strong, diversified workforce and economy.

Implementing Compass Blueprint will result in significant

through SCAG's Integrated Forecast program. The Compass Blueprint scenario describes a potential future for the region and distributes forecast growth in population and employment throughout the region. A palette of future development and redevelopment types (e.g., "city neighborhood" or "town center"), each with an associated density of households and jobs per acre, are mapped to specific locations, creating a scenario that can realistically accommodate the region's total forecast growth while maintaining or enhancing the region's mobility, livability, prosperity and sustainability. The details of the scenario, including maps showing the locations of the growth and tables describing the housing and employment densities and other attributes of the different development types, are presented in the 2008 RTP.

To accurately track implementation progress and assess consistency with the Compass Blueprint, SCAG will develop a monitoring plan and assessment methodology, as described below in the chapter's Action Plan.

LAND USE AND HOUSING GOALS

Successfully integrate land and transportation planning and achieve land use and housing sustainability by implementing Compass Blueprint and 2% Strategy:

- Focusing growth in existing and emerging centers and along major transportation corridors.

- Creating significant areas of mixed-use development and walkable, "people-scaled" communities.
- Providing new housing opportunities, with building types and locations that respond to the region's changing demographics.
- Targeting growth in housing, employment and commercial development within walking distance of existing and planned transit stations.
- Injecting new life into under-used areas by creating vibrant new business districts, redeveloping old buildings and building new businesses and housing on vacant lots.
- Preserving existing, stable, single-family neighborhoods.
- Protecting important open space, environmentally sensitive areas and agricultural lands from development.

LAND USE AND HOUSING OUTCOMES

- 100 percent of city and county general plans consistent with Compass Blueprint by 2012 (General Plans are the local blueprints for growth and best indicate whether local governments have adopted Compass Blueprint planning principles.).

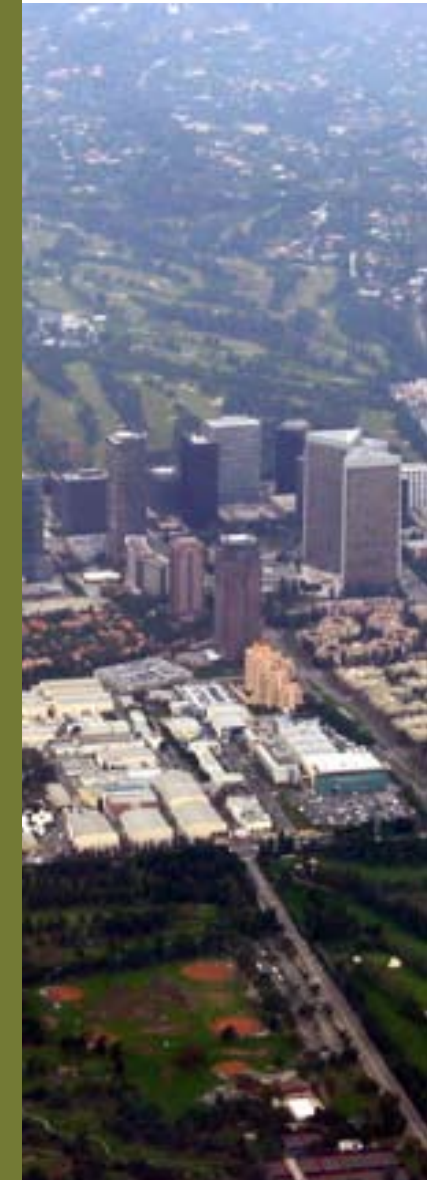
land use changes to only 2% of the region's land area.

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REGIONAL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

- Significantly increase the number and percentage of new housing units and jobs created within the Compass Blueprint 2% Strategy Opportunity Areas by 2012 and improve the regional jobs-housing balance (tracking the number of new units will measure the region's progress in accommodating forecast growth. Percentage of housing and jobs developed within the Opportunity Areas will indicate the locational efficiency of growth.).
- Reduce total regional vehicle miles traveled (VMT) from carbon-based fueled vehicles to 1990 levels by 2020 (the Land Use and Housing Action Plan can be expected to result in a 10 percent reduction in VMT in 2035 when compared to current trends. VMT serves as a proxy for jobs/housing balance, urban design, transit accessibility, and other urban form issues. VMT per household will decrease with Compass Blueprint implementation.).
- Add one new housing unit to stock for every 3 persons in population growth and one new housing unit for every 1.5 jobs (housing supply measures the availability of housing in comparison to population and jobs.).
- Reduce by 20 percent the percentage of households paying more than 50 percent of their income for combined housing and transportation costs from the 2000 levels (combined housing and transportation costs as a percentage of income is an important measure of housing affordability and efficient development.).
- Increase the region's first-time homebuyer affordability index so that the relationship of minimum qualifying income to entry-level home price mirrors or surpasses the national average (the first-time homebuyer affordability index is another key measure of housing affordability.).
- Increase regional homeownership so that the percentage of households owning their own home mirrors or surpasses the national average. Reduce the existing disparities in homeownership by ethnic group by 50 percent (the region currently suffers from low homeownership rates, especially among certain ethnic groups.).
- Achieve a regional housing vacancy rate of 1.5 percent for owner-occupied units and 5 percent for rental units (these vacancy rates are indicators of a healthy housing market.).
- Significantly improve the efficiency of land use in the region's urbanized areas by 2035 (this measures the number of people and jobs per acre and the region's ability to accommodate growth in parts of the region that are already urbanized or that become urbanized during the planning period.).



HOW LAND USE AND HOUSING POLICES PRODUCE MULTIPLE BENEFITS

Security and Emergency Preparedness: Balanced growth minimizing greenfield development at urban fringes reduces exposure to wildfires and other natural disasters that can tax our public safety services.

Public Health: Neighborhoods that generate fewer and shorter vehicle trips and greater transit and non-motorized use mean better air quality and fewer dangerous pollutants.

Environmental Justice: By cleaning up and redeveloping brownfields and providing urban parks, cities can revitalize urban cores where residents have too often been subjected to environmental hazards.

Climate Change: Mixed land uses with access to transportation can save residents up to 512 gallons of gasoline per year and reduce over 4 metric tons of CO₂ per year.

- Significantly decrease the rate of land consumed for urbanization between 2007 and 2035 (land consumption and urbanization measures the rate at which undeveloped land is converted to urban uses, relative to population growth.).
- All cities in the region adopt green building standards by 2012 (green building standards as part of local planning and permitting represents a key element of the Compass Blueprint Growth Vision – sustainability. Green building will also be a key to achieving the sustainability goals identified in the Water, Solid Waste, Energy and Air Quality chapters of this RCP.).

LAND USE AND HOUSING ACTION PLAN

IGR/Best Practices		Legislation	Coordination	Constrained Policies	Potential for Direct/Indirect Benefits								Other Benefits	
					Transportation	Air Quality	Water	Energy	Open Space	Economy	Security	Solid Waste	Public Health	Climate Change
SCAG Policies (SCAG policies shall be subject to consideration for future Overall Work Plans)														
			X	LU-1. SCAG shall provide technical assistance and regional leadership to implement the Compass Blueprint growth scenario and integrate growth and land use planning with the existing and planned transportation network.	X	X		X	X	X			X	X
			X	LU-1.1 SCAG shall provide planning services to local governments through Compass Blueprint Demonstration Projects. These projects will help local jurisdictions: • Update General Plans to reflect Compass Blueprint principles and integrate land use and transportation planning. • Develop specific plans, zoning overlays and other tools to stimulate desired land-use changes within 2% Strategy Opportunity Areas. • Complete economic analyses and community outreach to ensure that planned changes are feasible and responsive to stakeholder concerns. • Visualize potential changes, through innovative graphics and mapping technology, to inform the dialogue about growth, development and transportation at the local and regional level	X	X		X	X	X			X	X
			X	LU-1.2 SCAG shall continue with a targeted public relations strategy that emphasizes regional leadership, the benefits and implications of Compass Blueprint, and builds a sense of common interests among Southern Californians.	X	X		X	X	X			X	X
			X	LU-1.3 SCAG shall expand the role of the Compass Partnership, a forum convening representatives from government, civic leaders and the development community. The Partnership will advise the region on how public-private partnerships will help leverage the outcomes outlined in this chapter. SCAG shall encourage cooperative land-use decision-making and planning efforts between neighboring jurisdictions.	X	X		X	X	X			X	X
			X	LU-2. SCAG shall encourage leveraging federal and State and local funds to implement the Compass Blueprint.	X			X	X	X			X	X
			X	LU-2.1 All stakeholders should leverage state infrastructure bond financing, including the Department of Housing and Community Development's Transit Oriented Development program and should support legislation that will target infrastructure bond funds for regions with adopted growth visions such as the Compass Blueprint and for projects consistent with these visions.	X			X	X	X			X	X
			X	LU-3 SCAG shall develop an objective monitoring system to gather data and measure regional progress toward implementing the Compass Blueprint growth scenario and achieving the outcomes outlined in this chapter.	X	X		X	X	X			X	X
			X	LU-3.1 SCAG shall define a methodology for assessing local General Plans' consistency with Compass Blueprint.	X	X		X	X	X			X	X
			X	LU-3.2 SCAG shall develop a data set and methodology for determining what portion of regional growth is occurring within 2% Strategy Opportunity Areas.	X	X		X	X	X			X	X
			X	LU-3.3 SCAG shall further develop land use performance measures to be included in future Regional Transportation Plans.	X	X		X	X	X			X	X
X				LU-4 SCAG shall use its Intergovernmental Review process (IGR) role to provide robust review and comment on large development projects regarding their consistency with the Compass Blueprint.	X	X		X	X	X			X	X

LAND USE AND HOUSING

IGR/Best Practices	Legislation	Coordination	Constrained Policies	Potential for Direct/Indirect Benefits							Other Benefits		
				Transportation	Air Quality	Water	Energy	Open Space	Economy	Security	Solid Waste	Public Health	Climate Change
Local Government Policies													
X			LU-5 Local governments should provide for new housing, consistent with State Housing Element law, to accommodate their share of forecast regional growth.						X				
X			LU-5.1 Local governments should adopt and implement General Plan Housing Elements that accommodate housing needs identified through the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) process. Affordable housing should be provided consistent with RHNA income category distributions adopted for each jurisdiction. To provide housing, especially affordable housing, jurisdictions should leverage existing State programs such as HCD's Workforce Incentive Program and density bonus law and create local incentives (e.g., housing trust funds, inclusionary zoning, tax-increment-financing districts in redevelopment areas and transit villages) and partnerships with non-governmental stakeholders.	X	X		X	X	X				X
X			LU-6 Local governments should leverage federal and State and local funds to implement the Compass Blueprint.	X	X		X	X	X			X	X
X			LU-6.1 All stakeholders should leverage state infrastructure bond financing, including the Department of Housing and Community Development's Transit Oriented Development program and should support legislation that will target infrastructure bond funds for regions with adopted growth visions such as the Compass Blueprint and for projects consistent with these visions.	X	X		X	X	X			X	X
X			LU-6.2 Subregional organizations should leverage the federal transportation planning funds available at the subregional level, to complete projects that integrate land use and transportation planning and implement Compass Blueprint principles.	X	X		X	X	X			X	X
X			LU-7 Local governments should consider shared regional priorities, as outlined in the Compass Blueprint, Regional Transportation Plan, and this Regional Comprehensive Plan, in determining their own development goals and drafting local plans.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
X			LU-7.1 Local governments should take a comprehensive approach to updating their General Plans, keeping General Plans up-to-date and providing progress reports on updates and implementation, as required by law. Communities are required to submit the General Plan and General Plan elements to SCAG under the IGR Program pursuant to Federal Executive Order No. 12372 and CEQA Section 15206.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
X			LU-7.2 Developers and local governments should integrate green building measures into project design and zoning such as those identified in the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, Energy Star Homes, Green Point Rated Homes, and the California Green Builder Program.		X	X	X		X		X	X	X
X			LU-7.3 Local governments and subregional organizations should develop ordinances and other programs, particularly in the older, more urbanized parts of the region, which will enable and assist in the cleanup and redevelopment of brownfield sites.	X	X		X	X	X		X	X	X
X			LU-7.4 Local governments and subregional organizations should develop adaptive reuse ordinances and other programs that will enable the conversion of vacant or aging commercial, office, and some industrial properties to housing and mixed-use with housing.	X	X		X	X	X		X	X	X
Federal and State Government Policies													
	X		LU-8 The State should continue to support and provide funding for the statewide Blueprint Planning program.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

IGR/Best Practices	Legislation	Coordination	Strategic Initiatives	Potential for Direct/Indirect Benefits								Other Benefits	
				Transportation	Air Quality	Water	Energy	Open Space	Economy	Security	Solid Waste	Public Health	Climate Change
SCAG Initiatives (SCAG initiatives shall be subject to consideration for future Overall Work Plans)													
	X	X	LU-1S SCAG and county transportation commissions should initiate a program to secure significant resources for implementing Compass Blueprint. The program would provide infrastructure funding for specific allowable costs of development projects that integrate land use and transportation planning and are consistent with the 2% Strategy.	X	X		X	X	X		X	X	X
	X	X	LU-2S SCAG shall continue efforts, in collaboration with State agencies and local jurisdictions, to significantly reform State Housing Element law and the Regional Housing Needs Assessment process. These reforms should promote the broad goals stated by the Secretary of Business, Transportation and Housing and shared by SCAG: • Each municipality has a clear responsibility to provide housing based on the growth in population and jobs generated in the community. • Jurisdictions should be able to collaborate in meeting housing needs. • Planning for housing should be pursued over a longer time frame in line with other major growth planning efforts.						X				
Federal and State Government Initiatives													
	X	X	LU-3S The State, in collaboration with SCAG, other regional organizations and local jurisdictions, should work to re-structure and re-incentivize the municipal finance system that currently challenges virtually all local governments in California and often promotes inefficient land uses. Changes should: • Ensure the reliability of revenue streams to local government such that local finances are not the first resort in difficult budget years. • Re-structure sources of municipal revenue to place less emphasis on retail development and sales tax receipts, and to incentivize housing development and other land use changes consistent with regionally shared goals.						X		X		